

Oregon City Arch Bridge Work Begins Next Week

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Willamette River users will be the first to notice work on a \$10.6 million rehabilitation of the historic Oregon City / West Linn Arch Bridge, which begins next week.

Barges will move up the Willamette River and be installed Tuesday at the base of the 88-year-old bridge. The barges, used as work platforms and also to prevent material from impending bridge work from going into the river, are anchored by cable attached to each shore.

With barges in place, the river channel will shrink to 120 feet wide, requiring boaters to use additional caution as they move through the area. Fishing is not allowed near the barges while they are in the river and access to the current fishing dock is restricted while the barges are in place.

Project work begins this summer, but the bridge will not close until at least mid-January 2011. It will remain closed for two years while the contractor Wildish Standard Paving of Eugene replaces and repairs the deck, joints, rails, lighting and protective coating on its famous arch span.

The bridge must be closed to all traffic, including bicyclists and pedestrians for approximately two years during the rehabilitation. Motorists will detour over the nearby Interstate 205 Abernethy Bridge. A shuttle bus service will serve bicyclists and pedestrians.

The Oregon City / West Linn Arch Bridge opened in 1922 and is on the National Register of Historic Places. It was designed by Oregon State Bridge Engineer Conde McCullough, who also designed many of Oregon's lauded coastal bridges on U.S. 101.

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